

AGENDA ITEM 10: Abandoned and Derelict Vessels in the Delta

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Requested Action: **Receive update on abandoned and derelict vessels in the Delta**

Abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV) are both a navigation and pollution hazard in Delta waterways, and include both recreational watercraft and commercial vessels. This summer, the Commission, in conjunction with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Office of Spill Prevention and Response), sponsored UCSB graduate student Annie Daly to research ADVs in the Delta. Her work examined aerial and on-water survey data for abandoned vessels, costs for vessel removal, and how other states handle ADVs. Her final rough estimate of more than \$33 million to clean up all identified commercial and recreational ADVs in the Delta is almost entirely (all but \$700,000) for commercial vessels, such as barges and larger ships.

ADV are a continuing concern in the Delta. The California Department of Parks and Recreation-Division of Boating and Waterways (DBW) administers programs (Abandoned Watercraft Abatement Fund, or AWEF, and Vessel Turn-In Program, or VTIP) to assist local agencies in removing, reducing and preventing abandoned recreational vessels and marine debris. However, commercial vessels are not eligible for these programs.

2015 legislation (authored by Assemblyman Jim Frazier and signed by the Governor) accelerates the process for the removal of marine debris (defined as an unseaworthy vessel or portion of a vessel) by a public agency. While this statute change and DBW programs facilitate the removal of ADVs, there is growing recognition that additional tools are needed.

The Commission will hear from a panel of experts (panelist participation is still being coordinated at the time of this staff report) about the extent of the ADV problem and additional steps that might be taken to accelerate the removal of ADVs in the Delta.